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OLA QUARTERLY

Strategic Planning and Libraries

Libraries plan. They plan for services, for facilities, for collections, for staffing, and for funding. Library associations also plan, both for themselves and on behalf of the library communities they serve. However, in periods of accelerated change, such as the one in which we currently find ourselves, planning can seem analogous to the Greek myth of Sisyphus, whose ongoing punishment in Hades was to roll a huge stone up a hill only to have it roll down again as soon as he had brought it to the summit.

Planning is often seen as the process of forming a long-range picture, yet the constant flux we are currently experiencing can make it almost impossible to look out into the distant future. Sometimes we can make our task easier by bringing our scopes in closer, looking at the short-term picture. Paying close attention to our environment, whether political, economic, demographic, or technological, can help us to shape what we become in the long term.

This was the goal of OLA's Vision 2010 committee, to perform a series of environmental scans—of demographic, political, and economic trends in Oregon, of Oregon's libraries, and of trends within the library profession—to determine what the Oregon library community looks like today, and what it should look like in 10 years. The final report has not yet been completed, but it will provide a plan for Oregon libraries for the next decade, much as OLA's Vision 2000 did for the previous decade.

Also in this issue of *OLA Quarterly* you'll find several articles about planning in libraries, from the development of Multnomah County Library's strategic plan to planning for technology, consortia, disaster, development, and a new building. Contributors are Jeanne Goodrich, Multnomah County Library; Bob Miller, Salem Public Library; John Helmer, Orbis Library Consortium; Richard Griffin, Oregon State University; Faye Chadwell, University of Oregon; and Gary Jensen, Western Oregon University.

Deborah A. Carver, *Guest Editor*
University of Oregon

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Please refer questions and
input regarding the *Quarterly*
to:

Colleen Bell
OLA Publications Chair
Knight Library
1299 University of Oregon
Eugene, OR 97403-1299
phone 541-346-1817
fax 541-346-3485
cbell@darkwing.uoregon.edu

Graphic Production:
Sanda Communications
800 NW Starker Avenue
Suite 15
Corvallis, OR 97330
phone 541-752-7080
fax 541-758-7319
olaq@sandacom.com

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